

J. N. FOWLER.
Portable Wardrobes.

No. 140,130.

Patented June 24, 1873.

Fig. 1.

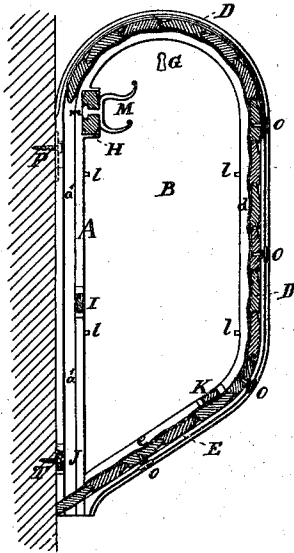


Fig. 2.

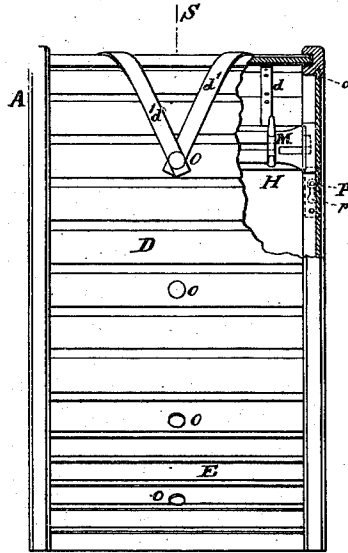


Fig. 5. Fig. 6.

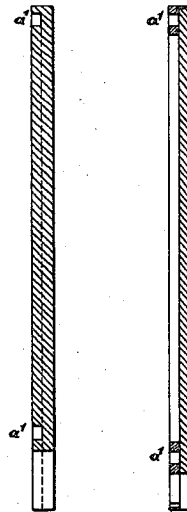


Fig. 3.

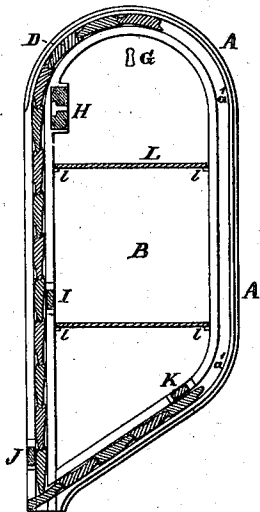


Fig. 4.

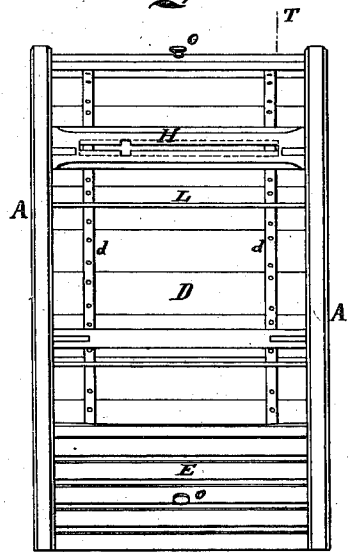
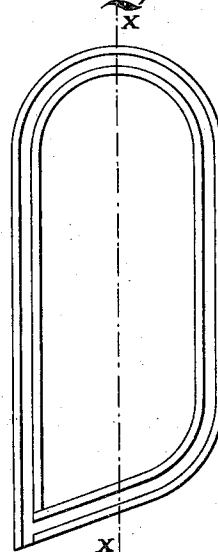


Fig. 7.



Witnesses;

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JOHN N. FOWLER, OF GREEN POINT, NEW YORK.

IMPROVEMENT IN PORTABLE WARDROBES.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. 140,130, dated June 21, 1873; application filed April 16, 1873.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JOHN N. FOWLER, of Green Point, county of Kings, State of New York, have invented certain new and useful improvements relating to Portable Wardrobes and Cupboards, which the following is a specification:

My invention may be carried out in various degrees of perfection. In its best form it provides a wardrobe, capable also of being readily changed into a cupboard, and which is easily separated into its details capable of being packed in a trunk. When adjusted for use it is secured upon the wall of the apartment. The mode of mounting being such that it cannot be dismounted except by operating on the inside. The apparatus being provided with suitable locking means the inclosed goods are perfectly secured. The construction may be made cheaply and adapted for poor families, or may equally serve those in better circumstances. It is particularly well adapted for families traveling who require to provide means for arranging garments and other articles in their hotels so as to be more roomy and conveniently accessible than in trunks.

The following is a description of what I consider the best means of carrying out the invention:

The accompanying drawings form a part of this specification.

Figure 1 is a central vertical section, on the line S S, in Fig. 2. Fig. 2 is a front elevation a portion being broken away. Fig. 3 is a vertical section on the line T T in Fig. 4. Fig. 4 is a front elevation.

In this figure the invention is represented as being opened ready for the reception of goods. In Fig. 2 it is represented in the closed condition. The first two figures show the invention arranged for a wardrobe, the last two for a cupboard. The remaining figures show some modifications.

Fig. 5 is a vertical section through one of the side pieces, made out of one solid piece of wood. Fig. 6 is a vertical section on the line X X, in Fig. 7, and Fig. 7 is a face view of a modified form of one of the side pieces.

Similar letters of reference indicate corresponding parts in all the figures.

The sides of the wardrobe are counterparts

of each other, and a description of one will suffice for both.

A is a doubly-grooved strip of ash, or other strong wood, capable of being steamed and bent. It is bent into the form represented extending up the back perpendicularly, then describing a semicircle at the top, descending again perpendicularly a considerable distance, and then inclining backward, and joining the back near the bottom. The space thus inclosed is filled with the panel B, which may be of well-seasoned wood, or, in some instances, may be made of muslin. I will describe it as wood, and fitting in the groove *a*, which is formed in the edge of the strip A, as shown. Another and larger groove, *a'*, formed in one of the faces of each strip, A, serves a different and very important function, that of sustaining and guiding the hinged slat-work connected together in two series, D and E. The slat-work E is first inserted, and being introduced into the groove *a'* from below and passed up the back of the structure, thence over the top, down the front comes to rest in the lower inclined portion of the front. I prefer the inclined form of this part, as when my invention is mounted, as it usually will be, in a high position in a room, the wardrobe causes less inconvenience to the heads of the occupants in consequence of this form. The second and longer series of slat-work D is then introduced in the same manner at the bottom, passed up the back, and caused to come over until it matches against the upper edge of the lower series E. A lock of any suitable construction is provided to hold the upper series D in this closed position when desired. G is the key-hole through which a lock is operated.

Both the series of slat-work may be formed of black walnut, or other suitable wood, and connected together by strips of leather *d e*, screwed or otherwise secured on the inner faces. The edge of each slat should be let into a groove in the edge of the adjoining slat, so as to make a tolerably tight joint. In order to prevent the joints of the upper series D from standing a little open, I also provide a second series of connecting-strips *d'*, secured on the outer faces as shown. Knobs O may be introduced at convenient points to facilitate the adjustment of the slat-work.

The sides A B are held firmly in parallel positions by means of removable cross-bars H I J, each of which is readily connected and disconnected from the sides when desired. The connection is formed by means of T-heads formed on the bars, or of metallic pieces firmly fixed thereto, and fitting in tapering mortises formed on the inner faces of the side pieces A B—that is to say, each side piece is formed with mortises which are open at their upper ends, and adapted to receive the T-ends of the cross-bars easily, but which are narrower below. On introducing the T-heads of the cross-bars H I J in these mortises, and pressing them downward into the contracted portion of the mortises, they hold the side pieces together very firmly. The corresponding cross-bar K fits in a corresponding manner in mortises near the bottom of the perpendicular part of the front of each side piece, and thus serves to hold the side pieces stiffly in the proper positions parallel to each other. The upper cross-bar H has a groove or slot properly formed to receive and support double-hooks M, having T-heads *m*, which fit in the groove. The hooks may be adjusted laterally in the groove at will. They are introduced and removed at a point where the front of the groove is widened, as shown in Fig. 4.

I propose, in making large wardrobes, in this manner to divide the side pieces A B at about the middle height and provide them with hinges, so that each may fold and lie in a shorter trunk in packing.

L is a shelf which may be introduced at pleasure, and supported upon pins, or projections *l*, formed in the respective side pieces. There may be as many of these shelves, and as many supporting-pins as are required for any particular purpose, so that the device may be used as a cupboard instead of a wardrobe, if desired. I have shown two series of the supports *l*, adapted to support two shelves.

It will be understood that to open the wardrobe the series of slat-work D is slid up at the front, thus opening the front, while the slats which were previously curved over the top slide down the back.

Large wardrobes or cupboards of this construction should have one or more anti-friction rollers supported in bearings near the top of the interior, and extending across from one side piece to the other. These anti-friction rollers should have such diameter as to press fairly against the inner face of the upper series D of the slat-work, and thus reduce the friction in opening and closing.

Some parts of the invention may be useful without the whole. Thus, the exterior connection *d'* of the slat-work D may be dispensed with by connecting the slats together with leather, cloth, or felt. Chamois-leather or other soft material, serving as a packing, may be secured in the joint between each of the several slats, and thus serve to more effectually exclude dust. The back of the entire structure may be covered with muslin, or

the edge provided with felt, to make a tight fit against the wall; or both these precautions may be employed, to aid in excluding dust.

To mount the construction upon the wall, two stout-headed pins or nails are firmly set in the wall, as indicated by P, and two corresponding locking-slots are made in the back faces of the strips A A, or in plates of metal affixed for the purpose. The lower edge of each slot is open, and adapted to receive the heads of the pins P. The sides A B, and the cross-bars H I J K, being properly applied together, and the headed pins P being set in the wall in the proper positions, the structure is lifted to the proper height and pressed back against the wall, so that the heads of the pins P will each enter the lower open portion of its respective slot *p*. Then the structure is drawn downward so as to receive the pins P into the upper and contracted portion of the respective slots *p*. Now the structure is firmly mounted. A screw, T, inserted through the cross-bar J, prevents the wardrobe from being detached until the screw is again removed, and the whole frame again lifted. After the frame is thus firmly mounted on the wall, the slat-work E is introduced and moved over to its place, and after it the slat-work D, and the lock being in proper condition, the whole is ready for use.

The hooks M may have washers of rubber or analogous material on the inner faces of their T-heads, so as to provide a little friction which will prevent them from rattling, and keep them in any position in which they are placed.

I believe it practicable to make the slat-work D E in great part of muslin, providing suitable stout material at the edges, to run in the grooves *a'*; and I propose to so construct my wardrobe in some cases. I also propose to make the rigid sides, in some cases, of a single piece each, and to produce the groove *a'* in its inner face. Another plan would be to glue and screw two slender bent strips upon such inner face, so as to form the groove *a'* between them; but I much prefer the bent strip A and separate panel B fitted in the groove *a*, as shown in Figs. 1 and 2.

I claim as my invention—

1. The T-headed cross-bars H I J K fitting in corresponding grooves or mortises in the rigid sides, in combination with movable slat-work, as specified.

2. The rigid side pieces A B of the bent strips A, doubly grooved, as indicated by *a a'*, in combination with the panel B and sliding slat-work, to close the front, as specified.

3. The exterior strapping *d* on the slat-work D, adapted to maintain the tightness of the joints on the curved upper portion of the wardrobe in combination with rigid sides, having curved grooves at the top, and connecting cross-bars, as specified.

The transverse sliding-hooks M, in combination with the grooved cross-bar H, and

suitable rigid sides and movable slat-work, as specified.

5. The shelves L, and supports l, in combination with movable slat-work, detachable rigid sides, and rigid cross-connections H I J K, as herein specified.

6. A wardrobe or cupboard formed of detachable parts, with slat-work moving in grooves, as specified, and provided at the back with the locking-grooves p, adapted to receive headed-pins P fixed on the walls, and

thereby to suspend the structure at will, and allow it to be firmly secured by the aid of a screw, T, inserted from the interior of the structure, all substantially as herein specified.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this 14th day of April, 1873, in the presence of two subscribing witnesses.

JOHN N. FOWLER.

Witnesses:

HENRY S. LEWIS,

ALBERT G. WASHBURN.